



The charity for people with diabetes

Specialist diabetes care compromised, claim consultant diabetologists

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The Association of British Clinical Diabetologists (ABCD) and Diabetes UK are calling for more funding and resources to improve standards of specialist diabetes care as a survey of consultant diabetologists across Britain reveals concerns about inadequate staffing levels, budget cuts, low morale and heavy workloads.

Patients' health put at risk

The report, launched today at the Diabetes UK Annual Professional Conference (APC) in Glasgow, shows that consultants are also concerned that the provision of psychological support, education and dietetic advice for people with diabetes is not up to standards, putting patients' health at risk.

The report by Diabetes UK and the ABCD shows that 10 per cent of diabetes and endocrine services are still being provided by a single-handed consultant although national standards state that this is inappropriate.

Consultants also believe that access to psychological support for people with diabetes is getting worse (falling from 45 per cent to 41 per cent) and that some specialist diabetes services are poorly supported in terms of education and the provision of insulin pumps.

Some improvements made

The report also found that some improvements have been made: better access to laboratory tests; provision of joint ante-natal diabetes services has gone up from 85 per cent to 93 per cent and provision of joint paediatric and adult specialist diabetes service have gone up from 60 to 75 per cent.

Equal access to the best care

"Diabetes UK believes that all people with diabetes should have equal access to the best possible care on the basis of individual clinical need," said Douglas Smallwood, Chief Executive of Diabetes UK.

"Lack of funding and staff cuts are putting services under threat

Investment urgently needed

"The Department of Health must take urgent action to ensure that there are adequate staffing levels and the skills of diabetes specialist healthcare professionals are retained to support the increasing numbers of people with diabetes and to meet their complex health needs. Investments in areas such as education, dietetics and psychological support are urgently needed so that people with diabetes get all the support they need."

The full report findings can be accessed under 'Downloads' on this page.